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The White Admiral *Lagoda camilla* (L.) (Lep.: Nymphalidae) and other unexpected butterflies in north London, Middlesex

A female *Lagoda camilla* L. was captured (and later released) flying high over *Hebe* blossom, beneath trees on 9 July 1997 at the end of our garden which abuts Coppetts Wood Nature Reserve (OS grid ref: 276916). This butterfly has recently been reported as expanding its range (Plant, 1987. *The Butterflies of the London Area*. LNHS). Plant also notes (p. 103) that there are few Middlesex records, from the earliest at Mill Hill in 1874 to a singleton at Finsbury Square in 1940. Herbert (1993. *Butterflies of the London Borough of Barnet: A Provisional Atlas*. Barnet Group, Herts and Middx Wildlife Trust) cites the above records and adds (p. 4) "recorded on Monken Hadley Common in 1950 and 1961)".

Four other butterflies have been seen for the first time in 36 years' residence here. A single male Brimstone *Gonepteryx rhamni* (L.) was taken on 25 May 1997 hovering over variegated ivy. However, this may be only a "wandering male" as noted by Herbert (*op. cit.*, p. 18) as sometimes occurring outside their normal area of distribution. On 18 and 21 July 1997, individual Gatekeeper butterflies *Pyronia tithonus* (L.) were seen on flowers of honeysuckle and golden rod respectively. On 29 July 1997 a rather worn female White-letter Hairstreak *Strymonidia w-album* (Knoch) was found feeding on golden rod. Herbert (*op. cit.*) notes only "one tenuous hold" (Monken Hadley Common) for this species in Barnet, but notes that it was recently recorded in Trent Park [Enfield]. Finally a dead, headless female Purple Hairstreak *Quercusia quercus* L. was found on the garden path on 6 August 1997. We have heard that a colony of this species has been observed above the tops of oak trees in Coppetts Wood in recent years.— K.G.V. SMITH AND J.M.E. SMITH, 70 Hollickwood Avenue, London N12 0LT.